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Sweetheart Dreams of Yesterday

Drawings by

Edna Longest

Verse by

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THE REVERIE

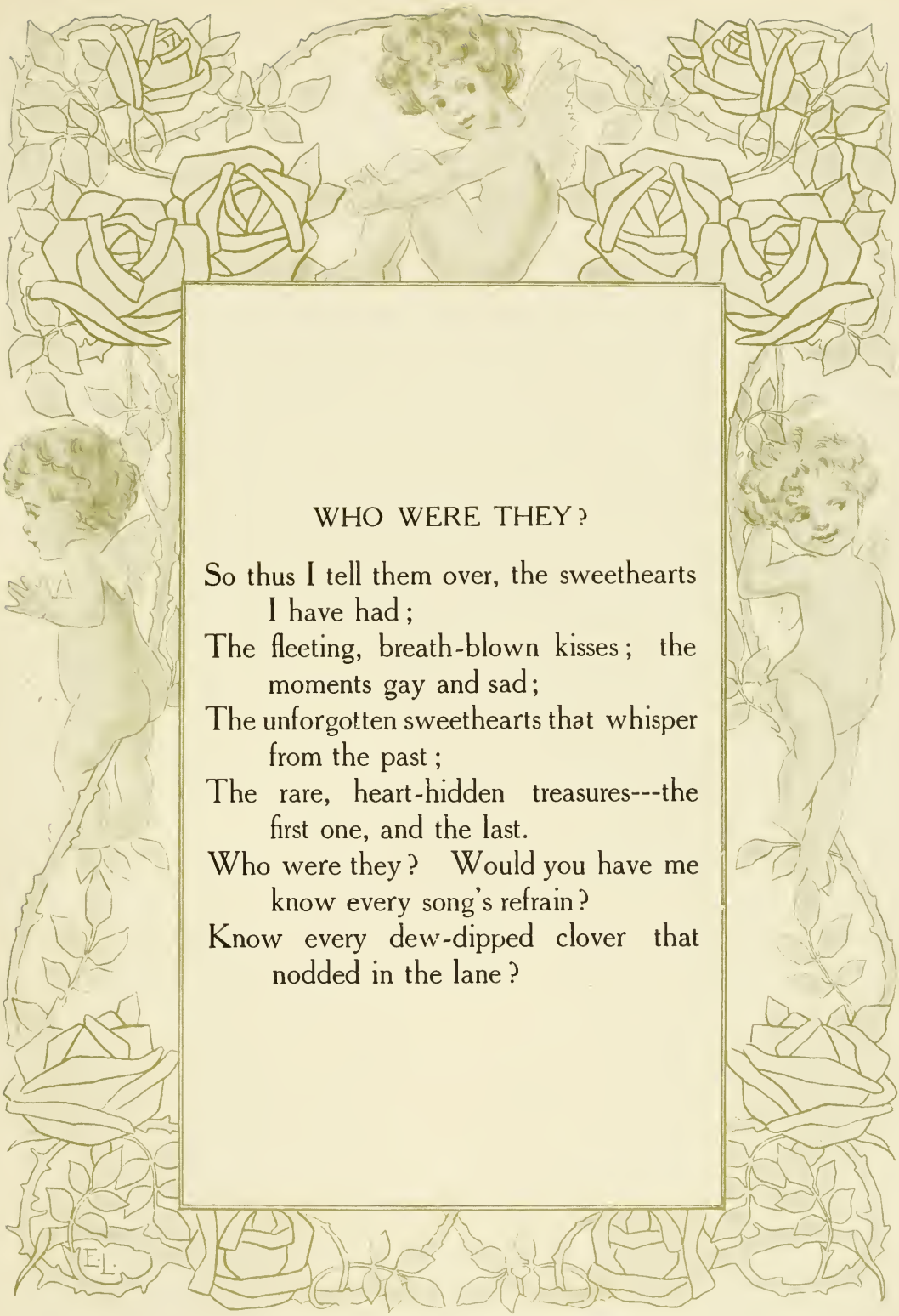
A Sweetheart Dream of Long Ago---here in the dim-lit room
With all the midnight magic of the shadow-faint perfume
That drifts from roses far away, as though it came again,
An echo of the fragrance of the roses that were then.

And now the smoke is wreathing in a wonder-working haze,
For through it smile the faces that I knew in other days---
The ringlets black or golden, and the eyes of brown or blue,
The laughing lips and dimpling cheeks of all the girls I knew.

Ah, well! I muse upon them, and upon the other years
I coax again the laughter and the hopings and the fears;
I see again the garden wall, the willows by the brook,
The clover nodding by the lane, the little vine-clad nook.

So life is worth the living when one knows what joys there are
Blent in the subtle incense of his friendly old cigar---
The incense that shapes idly into faces he may see
And gives him back the gladness of the days that used to be.

The Sweetheart Dreams of Long Ago--they may be yours or mine;
We loiter in the olden paths where all was fair and fine,
Until out of the shadows, making all our pulses stir,
There rises for our happiness the flower face of Her!



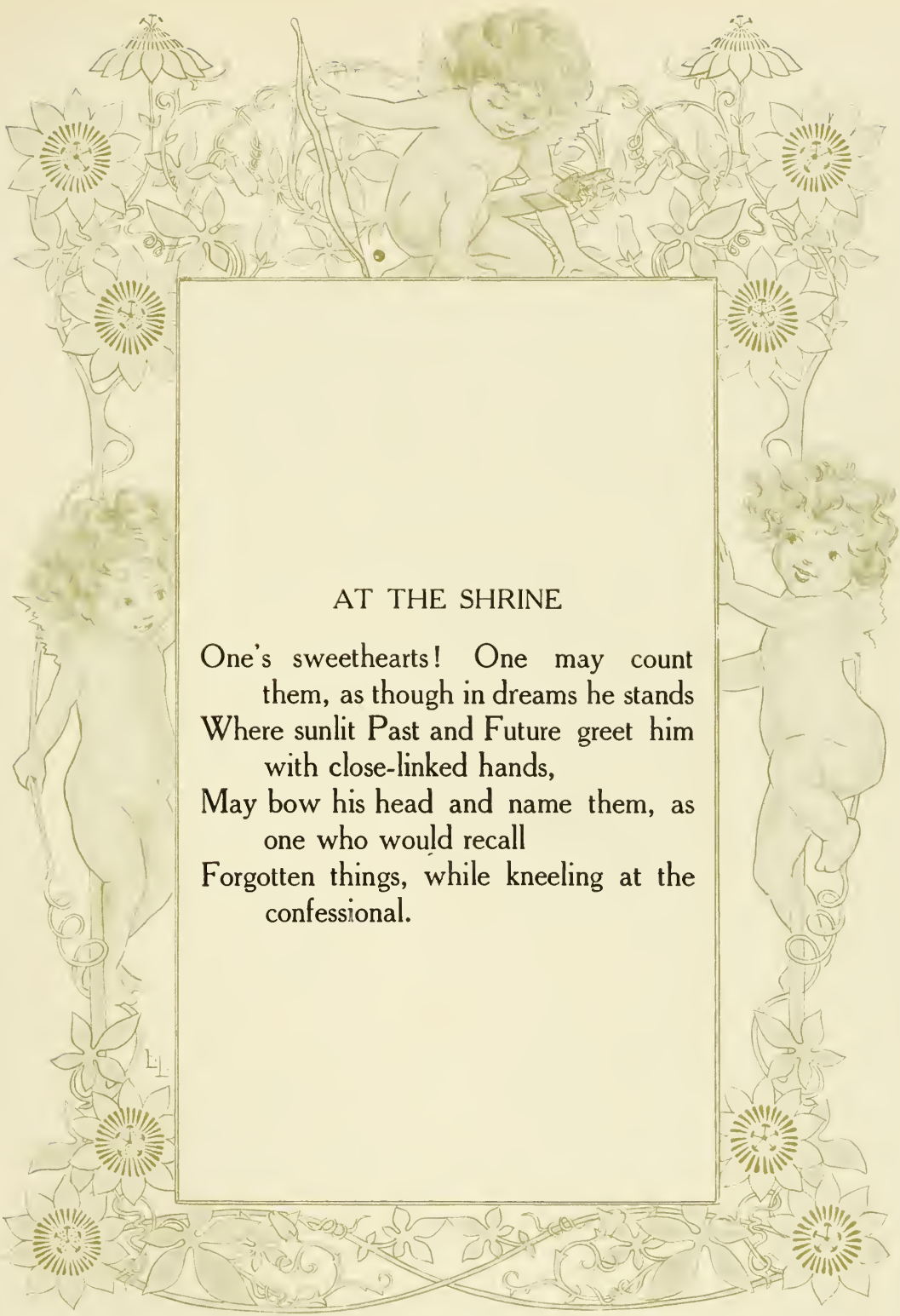
WHO WERE THEY?

So thus I tell them over, the sweethearts
I have had;
The fleeting, breath-blown kisses; the
moments gay and sad;
The unforgotten sweethearts that whisper
from the past;
The rare, heart-hidden treasures---the
first one, and the last.
Who were they? Would you have me
know every song's refrain?
Know every dew-dipped clover that
nodded in the lane?

THE FIRST LOVE

When she was eight and I was ten
I think my heart awakened then.
An awkward, boyish wooer I,
Who knew naught else to do but sigh,
But she --- Well, women young or old
Know more than sages ever told.
Would that we might be back again
Where she was eight and I was ten.

EDNA LONGEST



AT THE SHRINE

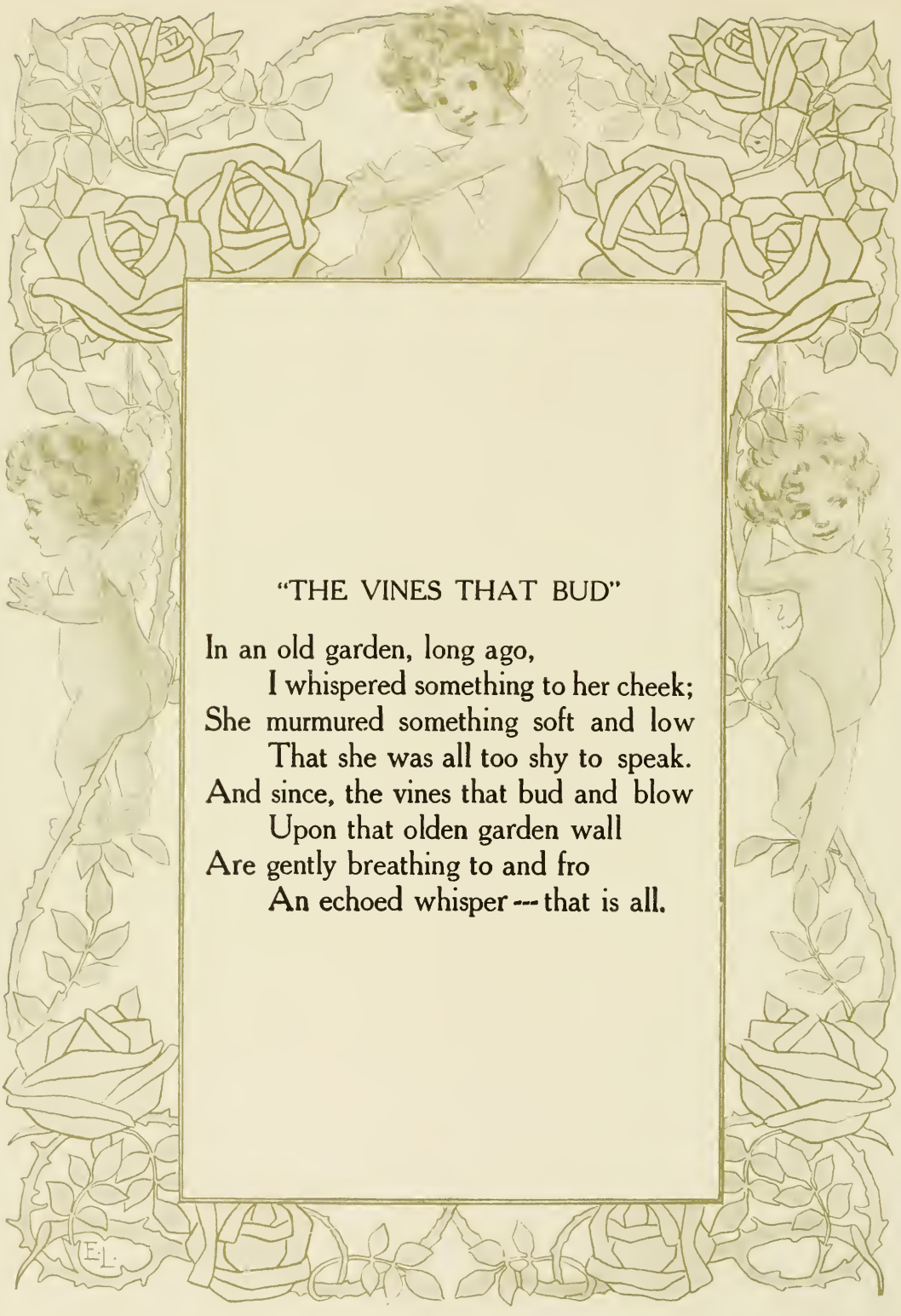
One's sweethearts! One may count
them, as though in dreams he stands
Where sunlit Past and Future greet him
with close-linked hands,
May bow his head and name them, as
one who would recall
Forgotten things, while kneeling at the
confessional.

SWEET SIXTEEN

Sometimes she smiled, sometimes she sighed,
Sometimes her eyes looked far away;
The little curl she could not hide
Upon her forehead white would stray---
And now remembering, I see
A shadowed evanescent girl,
But glinting ever goldenly
I trace the ripples of her curl.

HER LETTERS

I came upon them yesterday ---
The letters that she wrote to me,
Which I had safely put away
Where no o'er-curious eyes might see.
Ah, how vain hopes must rise and fall!
How fate may thwart our fond designs!
If she had only written all
I thought I read between the lines!

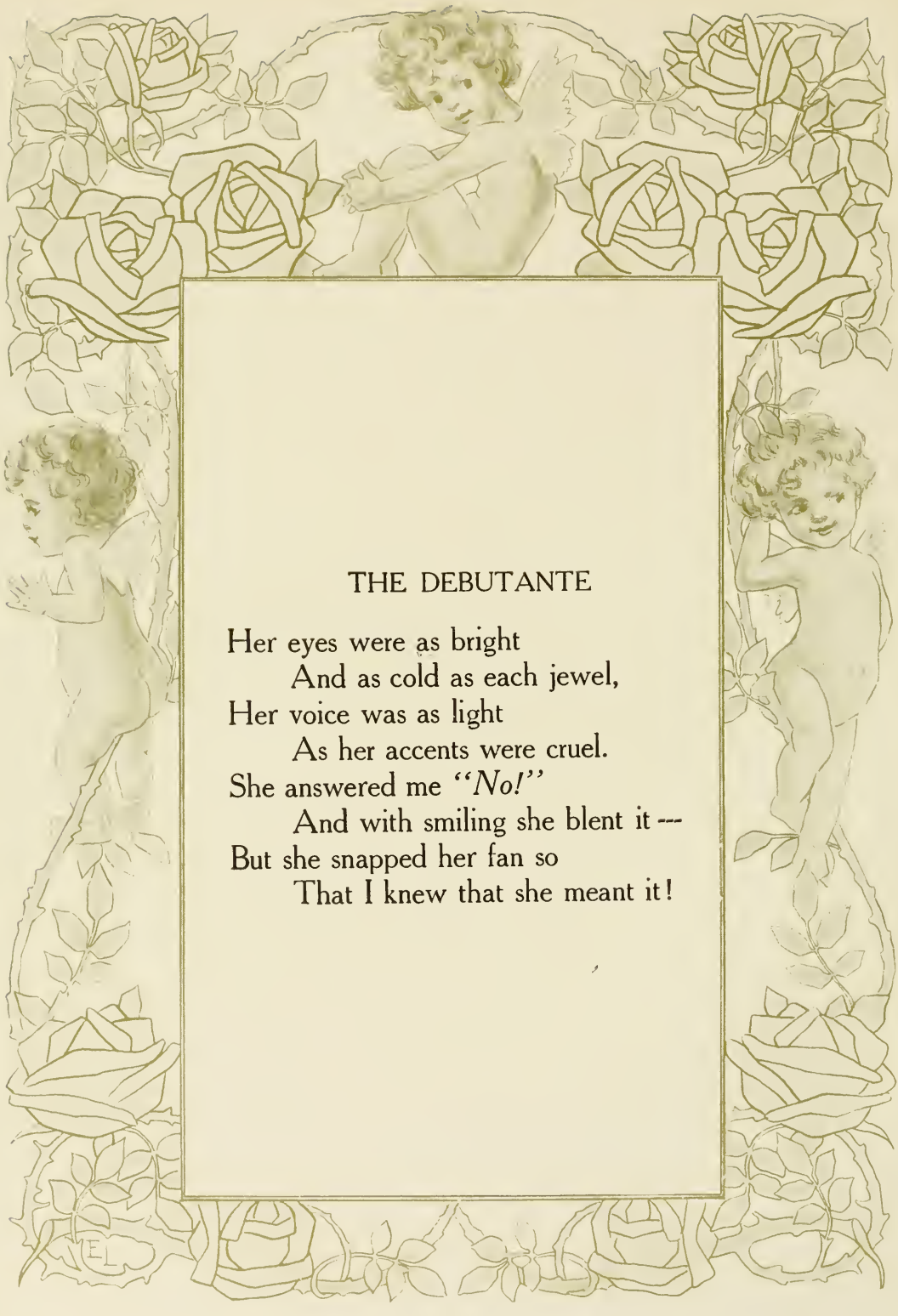


"THE VINES THAT BUD"

In an old garden, long ago,
I whispered something to her cheek;
She murmured something soft and low
That she was all too shy to speak.
And since, the vines that bud and blow
Upon that olden garden wall
Are gently breathing to and fro
An echoed whisper --- that is all.

HER HAIR

What of her hair? Was it brown or gold?
Black? Or a shimmering auburn tint?
Where is the lock that you used to hold
Marveling over its glow and glint?
Where is it now? Is it, too, forgot---
Lost with the treasured forget-me-not?



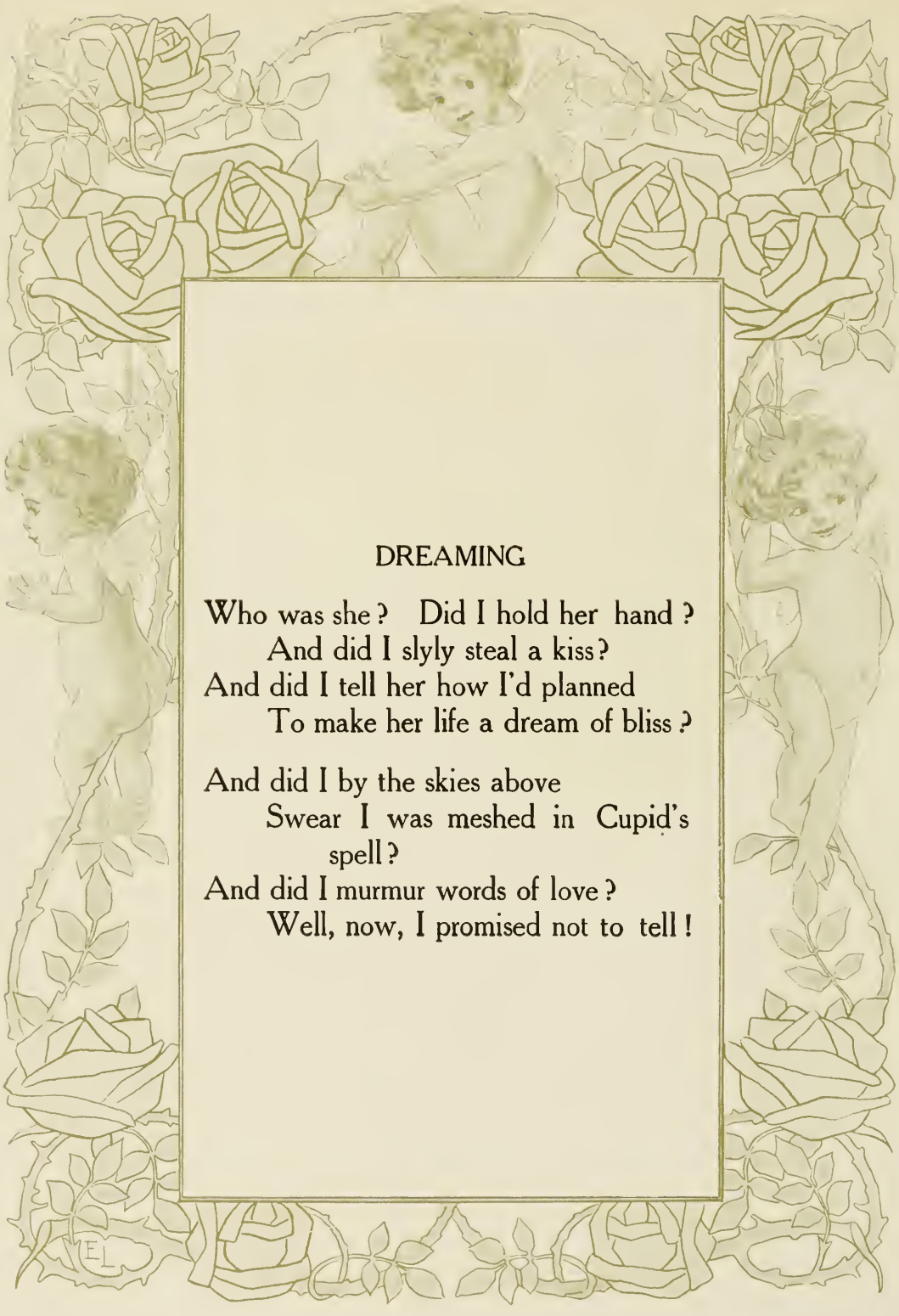
THE DEBUTANTE

Her eyes were as bright
And as cold as each jewel,
Her voice was as light
As her accents were cruel.
She answered me *"No!"*
And with smiling she blent it ---
But she snapped her fan so
That I knew that she meant it!

FLINA LONGEST

HER LIPS

Sure, lad, her lips were as red as the roses
Blown at the dawning and rinsed in the dew,
Sweet as the honey-filled bud that uncloses,
Coaxing the bees as a rose-bud can woo!
Never a rose that I see but reminds me
Of the red lips that would blossom to smiles ---
Every memory seeks me and finds me
Counting the hearts that were lost through her wiles.



DREAMING

Who was she? Did I hold her hand?
And did I slyly steal a kiss?
And did I tell her how I'd planned
To make her life a dream of bliss?

And did I by the skies above
Swear I was meshed in Cupid's spell?
And did I murmur words of love?
Well, now, I promised not to tell!

EDNA LONGEST

HER FROWN

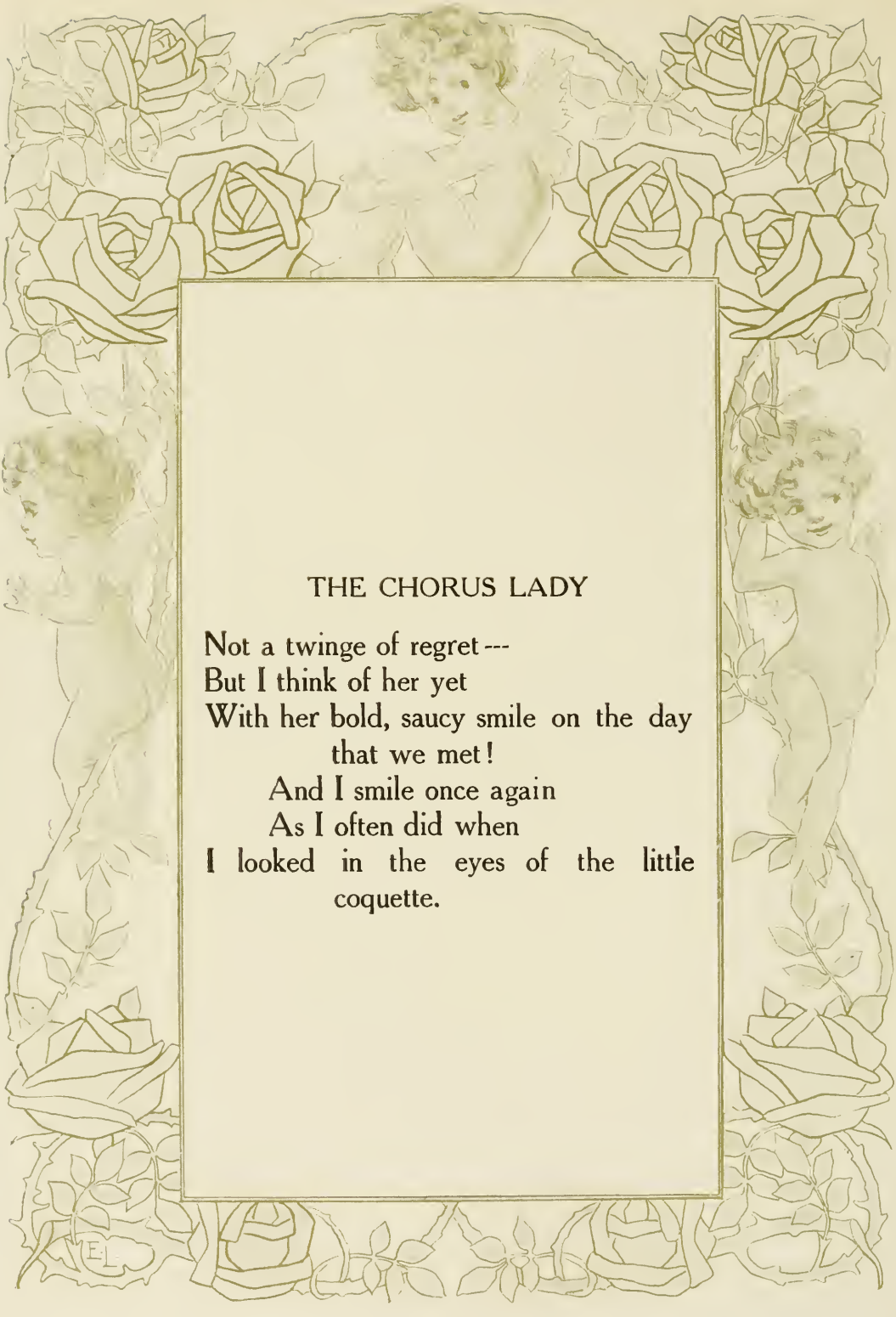
She frowned on me, and forth I went
To seek the solace of the world,
By gloom's unwieldy burden bent,
Into the pit of sorrow hurled.
She frowned on me again when I
Came stolidly back to the town
She frowned on me---and this is why:
Because I fled at her first frown.

FROM THE BLUE GRASS

Down the road and up the road all in the sunny weather,
Up the road and down the road we galloped on together
Until at last the cross-roads came all on a gloomy day
And out upon another path she turned and rode away.

HER SMILE

Sure, do ye know the smile of her? 'Tis
but another wile of her,
To tangle hearts and dangle hearts
as victims of her charms!
But who would be afraid of her, dis-
couraged or dismayed of her?
All sunny-sweet and honey-sweet,
her smiles give no alarms.

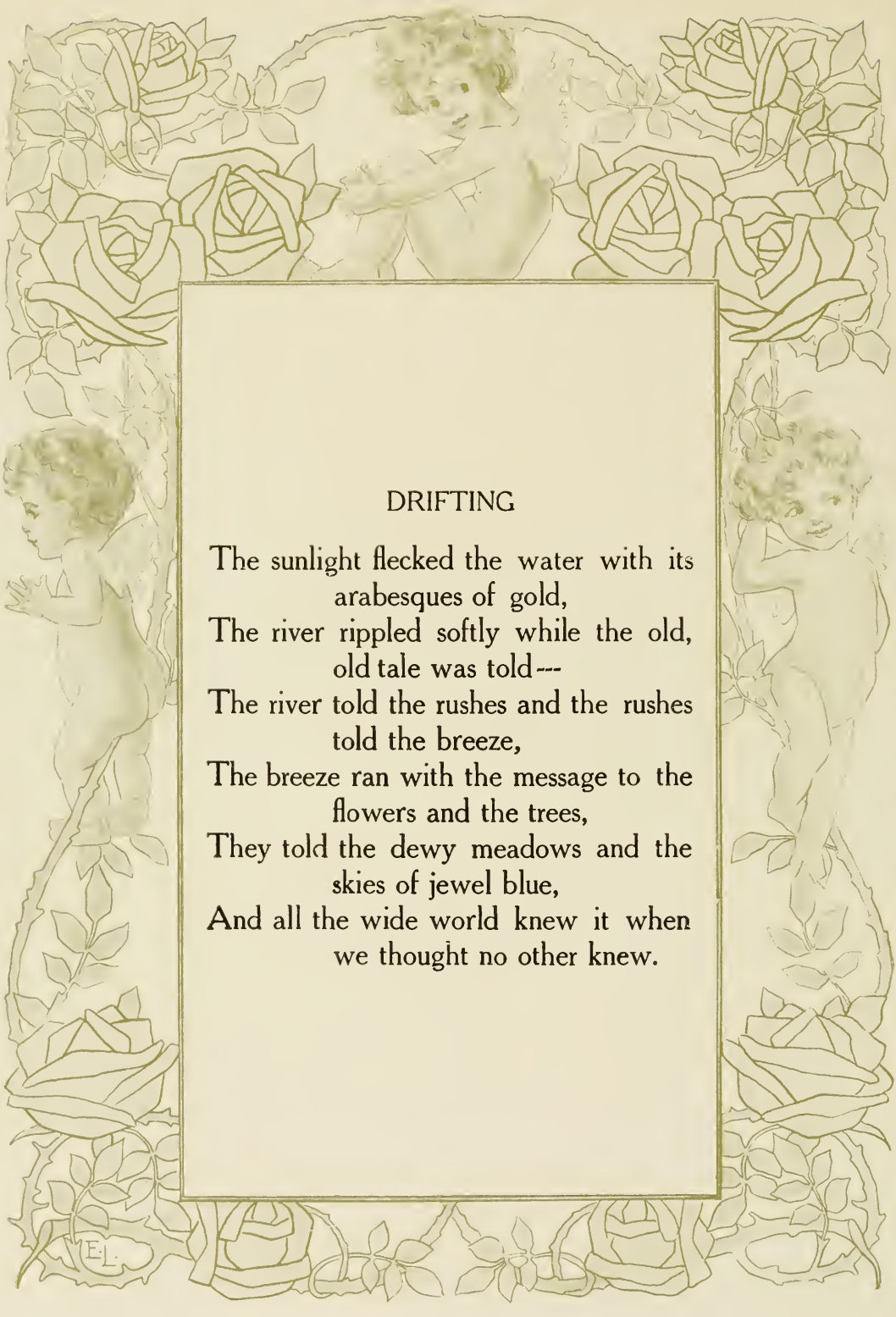


THE CHORUS LADY

Not a twinge of regret---
But I think of her yet
With her bold, saucy smile on the day
that we met!
And I smile once again
As I often did when
I looked in the eyes of the little
coquette.

IN AUTUMN

And once in somber autumn, the time
of seed and husk,
We two sat near together and watched
the creeping dusk
That faltered through the hazes where
incense-smoke was hung ---
The smoke at autumn's altar from sum-
mer's censer swung,
And where is she? Ah, question of all
the yesterdays
If they have taken note of all who
watched the autumn's haze.

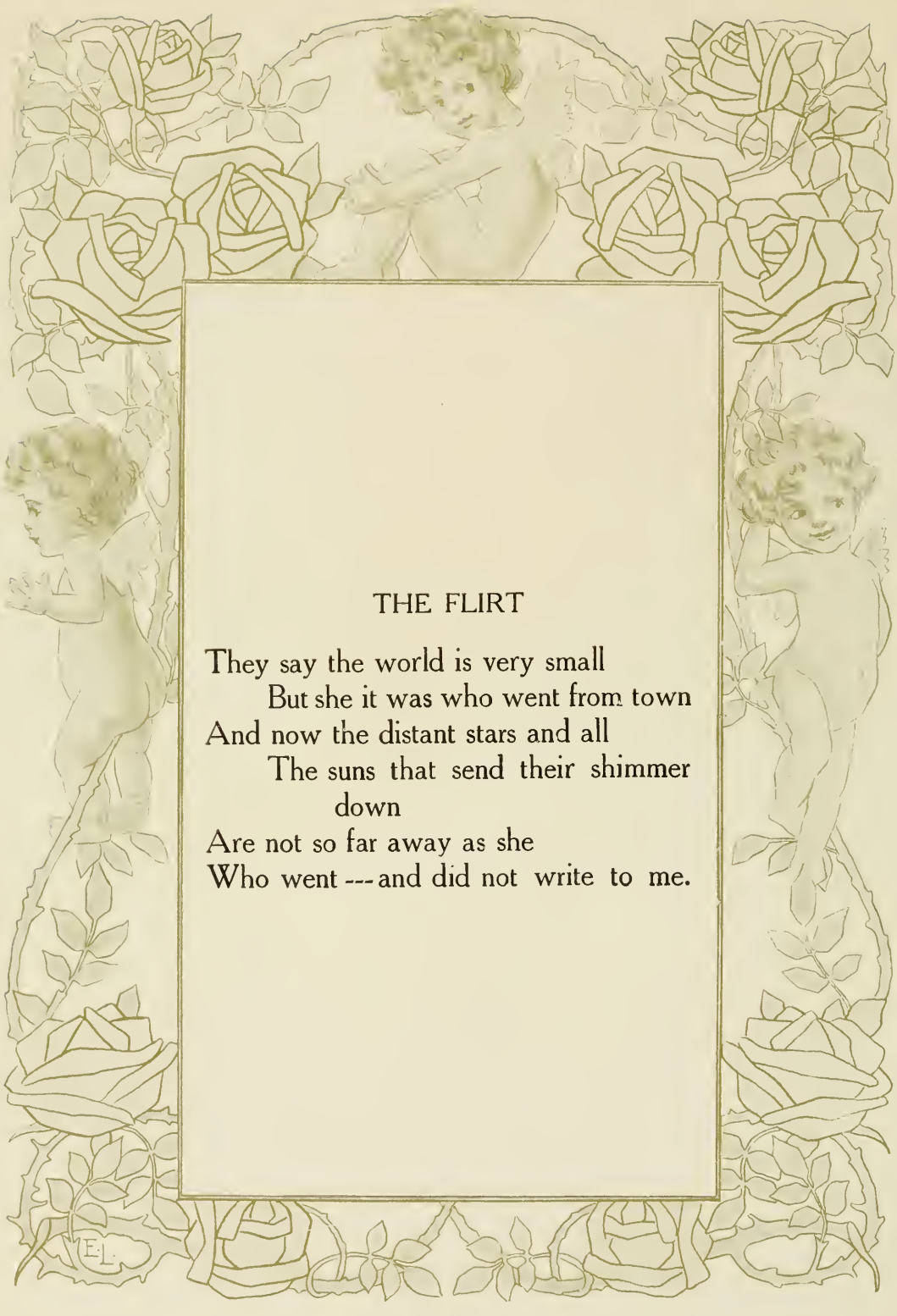


DRIFTING

The sunlight flecked the water with its
arabesques of gold,
The river rippled softly while the old,
old tale was told---
The river told the rushes and the rushes
told the breeze,
The breeze ran with the message to the
flowers and the trees,
They told the dewy meadows and the
skies of jewel blue,
And all the wide world knew it when
we thought no other knew.

THE DINNER

The day we dined together
All sunny was the weather;
She wore a wondrous gown, and in her
hat a nodding feather;
And care had slipped its tether---
But what we ate, or whether
We ate at all, I do not know. I know
we dined together!



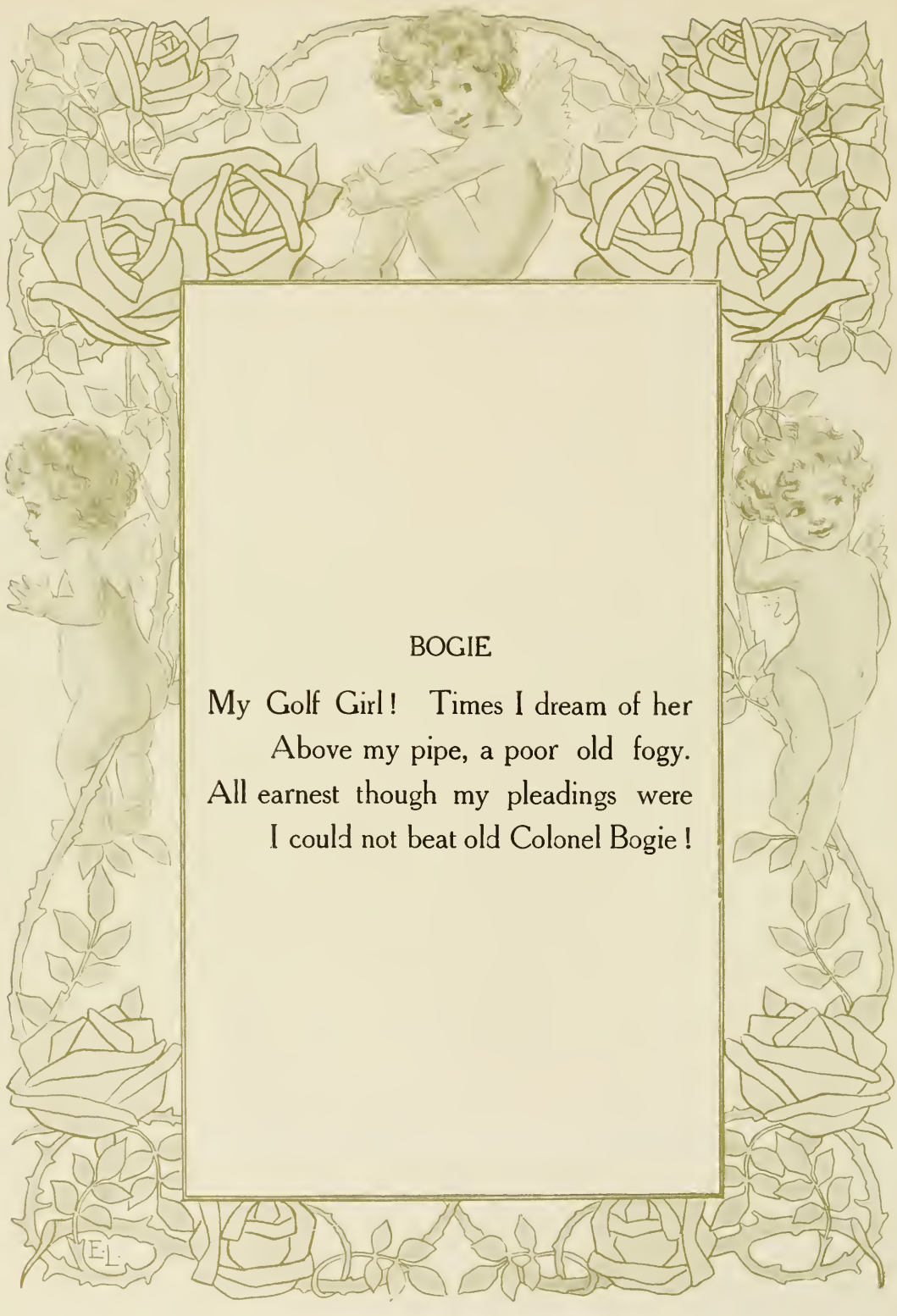
THE FLIRT

They say the world is very small
But she it was who went from town
And now the distant stars and all
The suns that send their shimmer down
Are not so far away as she
Who went --- and did not write to me.

EDNA LONGLEY

HER FEET

All things were sweet of her --- Ah, but
the feet of her!
Light as a thistledown blown on
the breeze.
Lad, when her merry feet danced 'twas
like fairy feet
Treading to music in magical keys.
Little she cared at all whom she ensnared
at all,
Little she recked of the pang and
the smart.
Sure, all was sweet of her --- Ah, but
the feet of her
Danced through my life as they
trod on my heart!



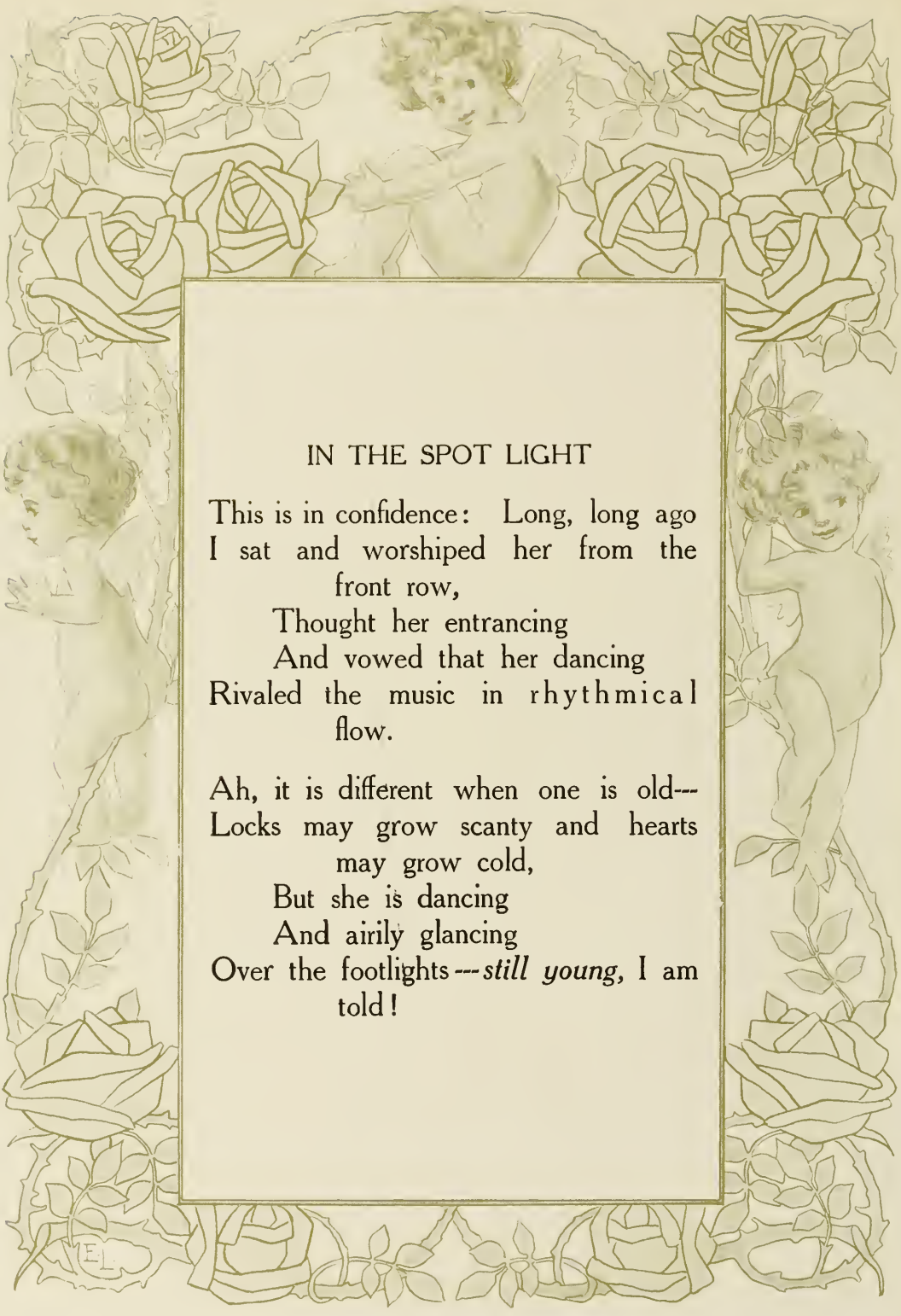
BOGIE

My Golf Girl! Times I dream of her
Above my pipe, a poor old fogy.
All earnest though my pleadings were
I could not beat old Colonel Bogie!

ELNA LONGLEY

HER HAND

It is so very white and small
One cannot understand at all
How it could be so great a prize
As truly it is in my eyes,
Nor how, and with such cunning art,
Relentlessly it holds my heart.



IN THE SPOT LIGHT

This is in confidence: Long, long ago
I sat and worshiped her from the front row,
Thought her entrancing
And vowed that her dancing
Rivaled the music in rhythmical flow.

Ah, it is different when one is old---
Locks may grow scanty and hearts may grow cold,
But she is dancing
And airily glancing
Over the footlights---*still young,* I am told!

LINA LONGEST

A BROTHER

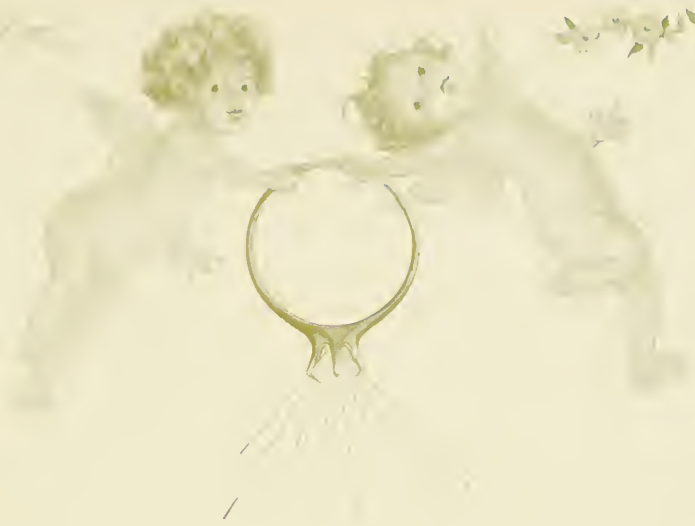
A sister she
Will be to me,
And so with joy I greet her---
I always kiss
My pretty sis
Each time I chance to meet her.

WHERE THE ROLLING TIDE COMES IN

One summer when she ruled the beach
She charmed me with her smile and speech;
She vowed eternal faith to me
That summer there beside the sea.

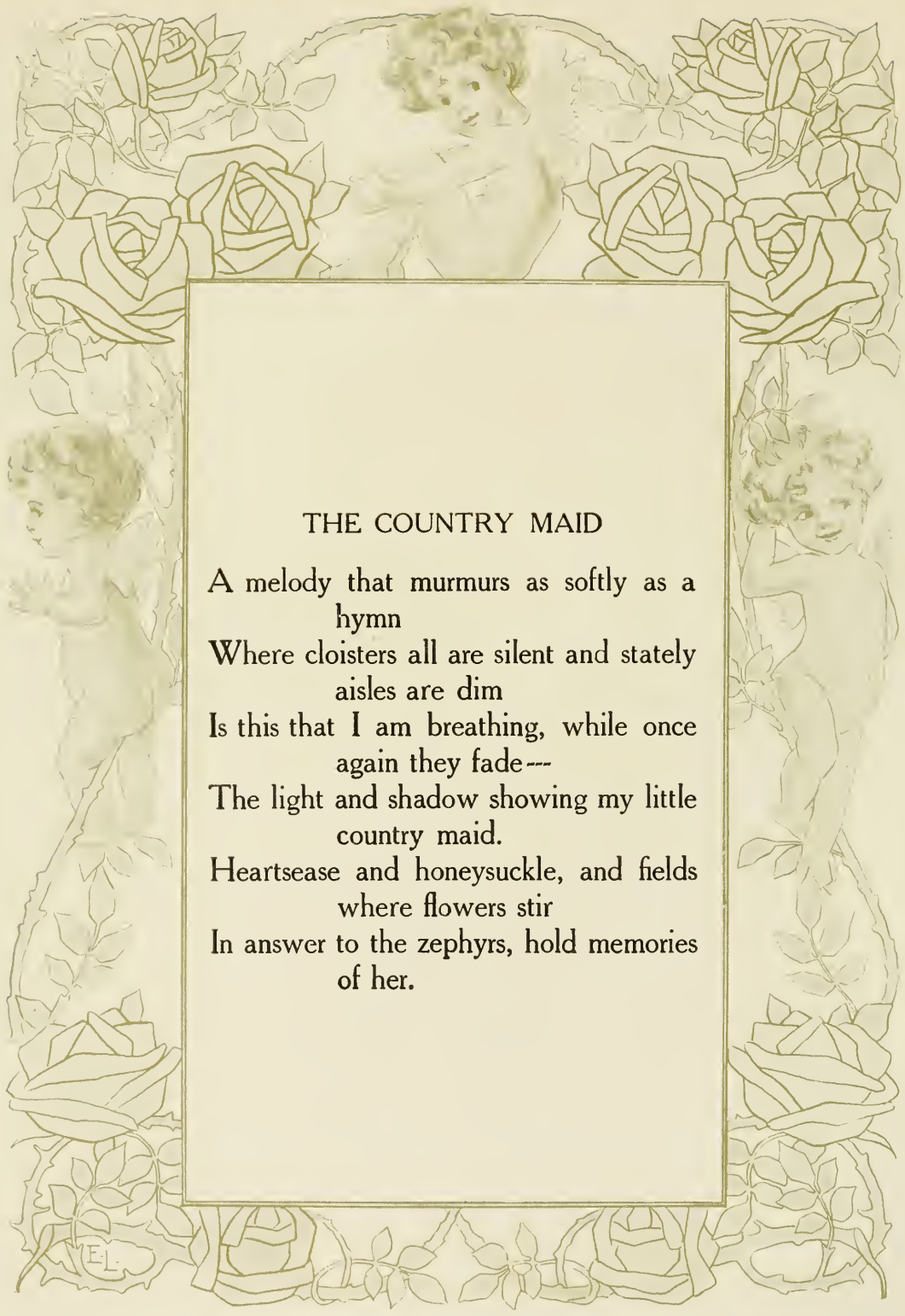
Next summer I went back again---
Another man she beamed on then!
My lip with scorn began to curl---
But I was with another girl.

EVA LONGEST



A GLIMPSE

The day that it was raining
She came along the street
And all the little raindrops ran
To dance about her feet.
And though she walks the city's ways
Or clover-tangled lane,
The folk that look upon her see
The sunshine in the rain.



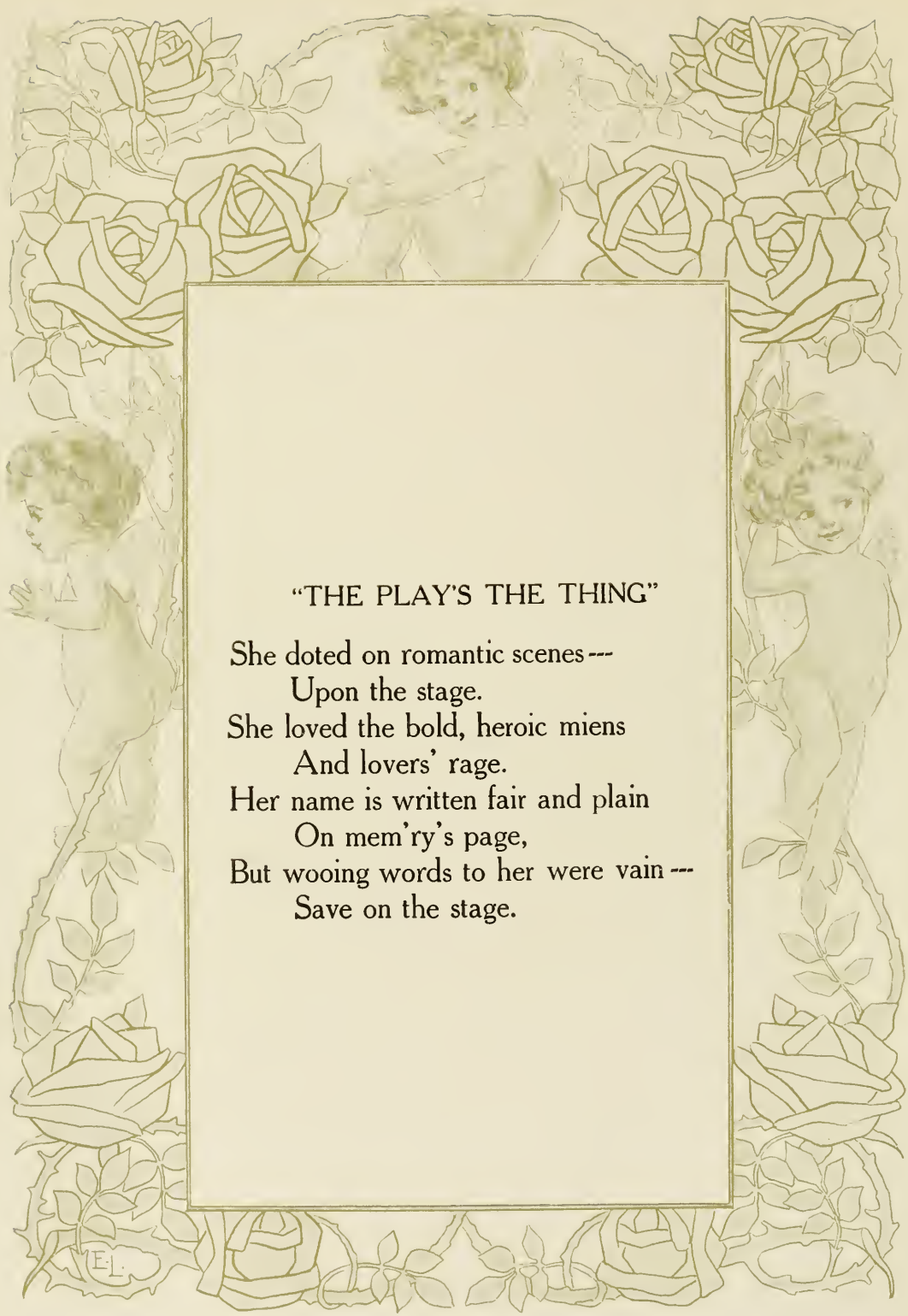
THE COUNTRY MAID

A melody that murmurs as softly as a hymn
Where cloisters all are silent and stately aisles are dim
Is this that I am breathing, while once again they fade---
The light and shadow showing my little country maid.
Heartsease and honeysuckle, and fields where flowers stir
In answer to the zephyrs, hold memories of her.

EDNA LONGEST

WISHES

There was a flower in her hair---
I wished that it were I,
A bracelet on her wrist so fair---
To have its place I'd sigh.
And on the day she was a bride
One more wish came from me---
Another man stood at her side
And I could not be he.



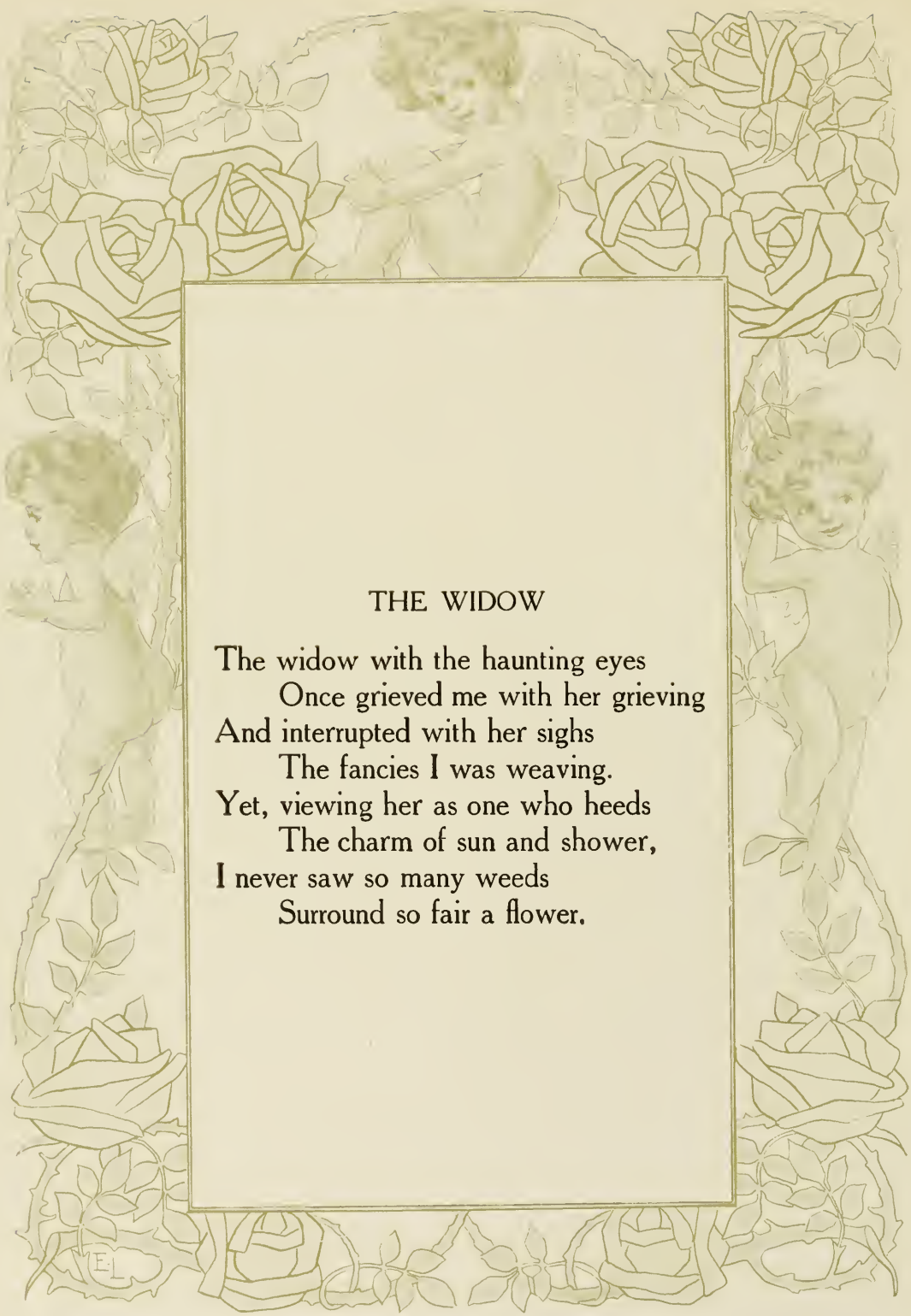
"THE PLAY'S THE THING"

She doted on romantic scenes---
Upon the stage.
She loved the bold, heroic miens
And lovers' rage.
Her name is written fair and plain
On mem'ry's page,
But wooing words to her were vain---
Save on the stage.

EDNA LONGEST

THE HERETIC

Through dim-lit aisles the people throng
And I come with them, bowed of head
And harking to the holy song
And to the prayers that are said,
But, wicked though it be, I say
My heart would very much prefer
Some not-so-crowded shrine today ---
A worshiper, I worship her!



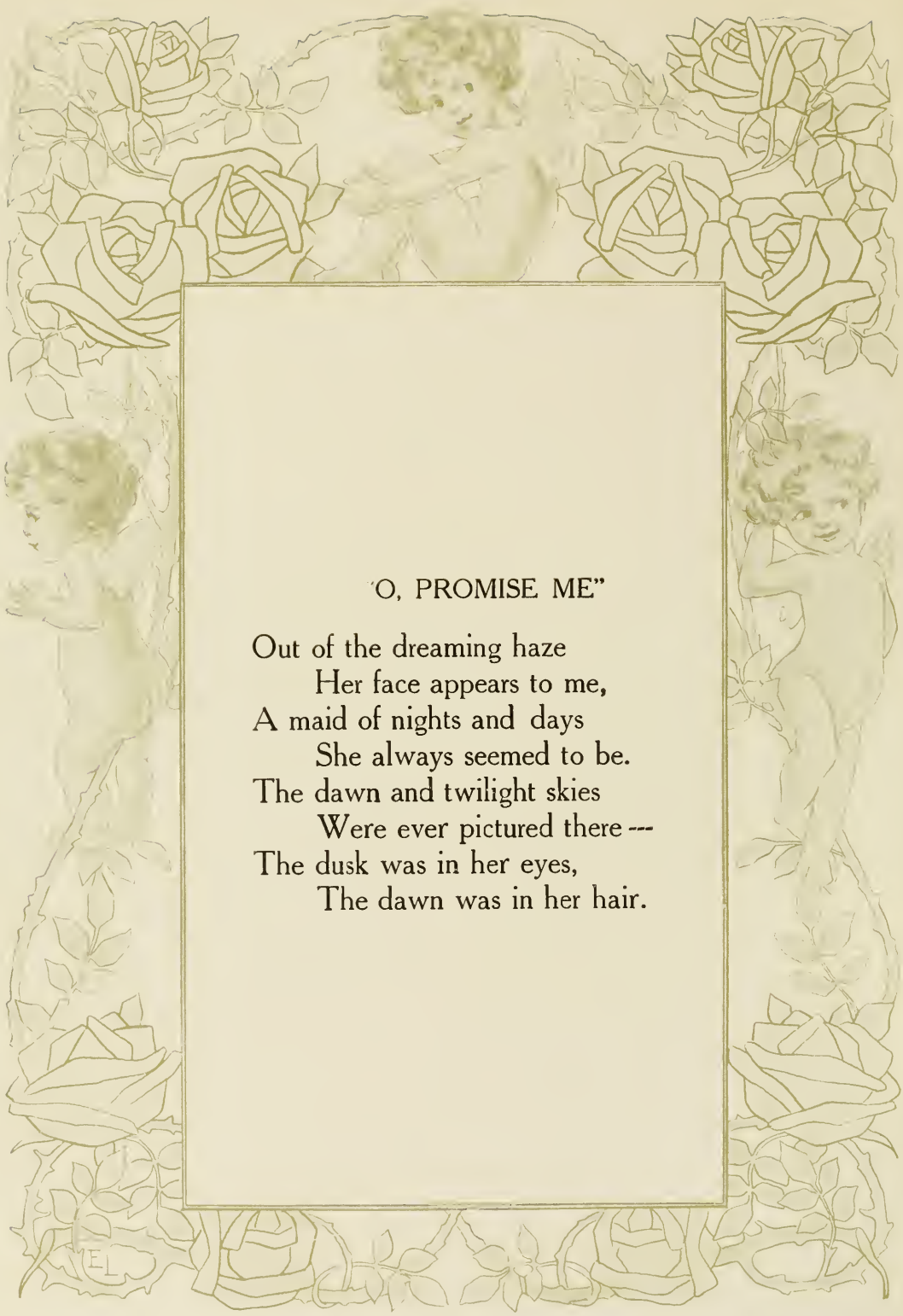
THE WIDOW

The widow with the haunting eyes
Once grieved me with her grieving
And interrupted with her sighs
The fancies I was weaving.
Yet, viewing her as one who heeds
The charm of sun and shower,
I never saw so many weeds
Surround so fair a flower.

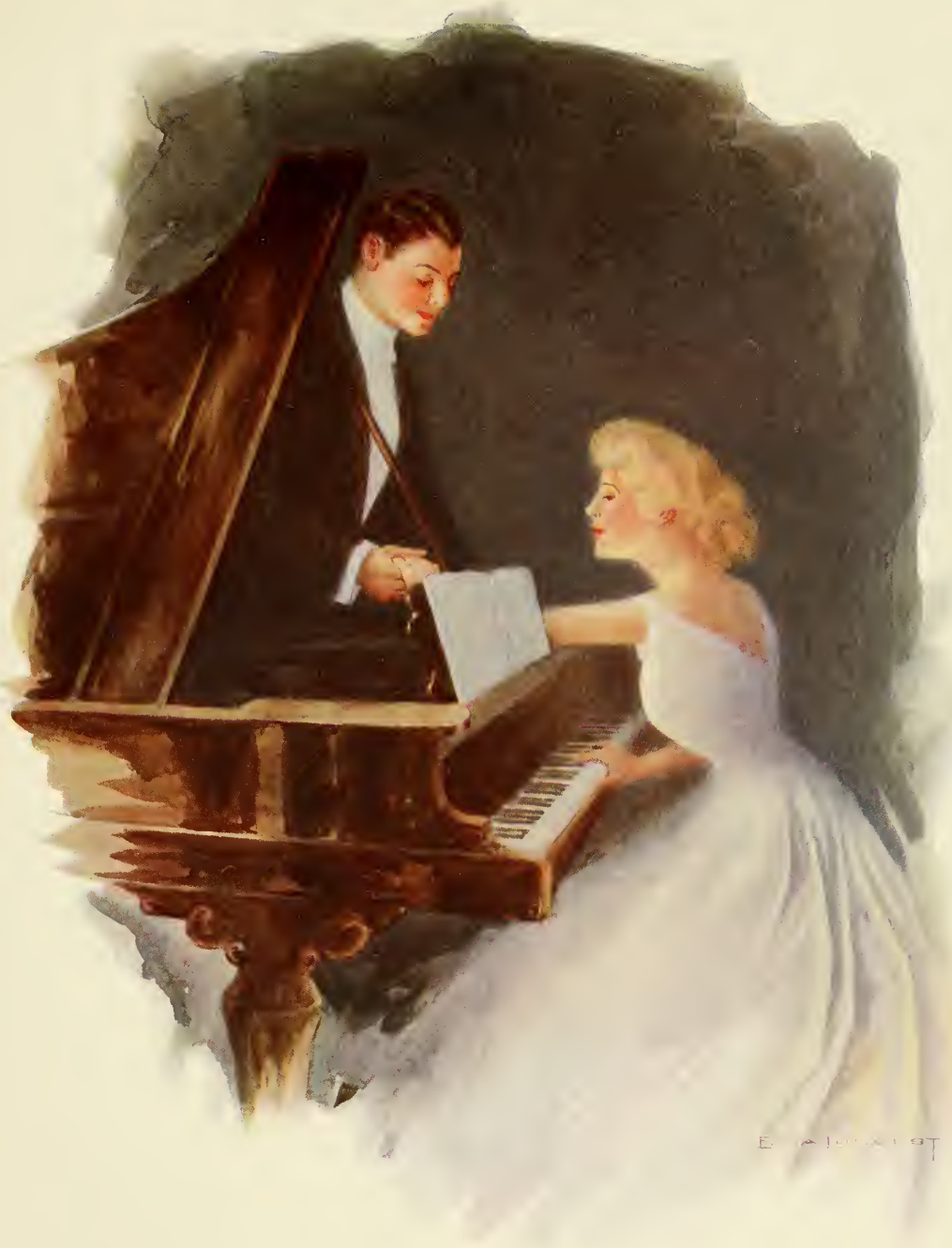
EDNA LONGFOOT

HER VOICE

In dreams I hear her singing the old
songs, down the way,
The songs of haunting music, sweet as
the breath of May;
Songs lilting with her laughter, that
bubbled out and shook,
As light as spray that silvered the ripples
of the brook.
The magic of the melody that held me
overlong
Until my heart-strings quivered in an
echo of her song!

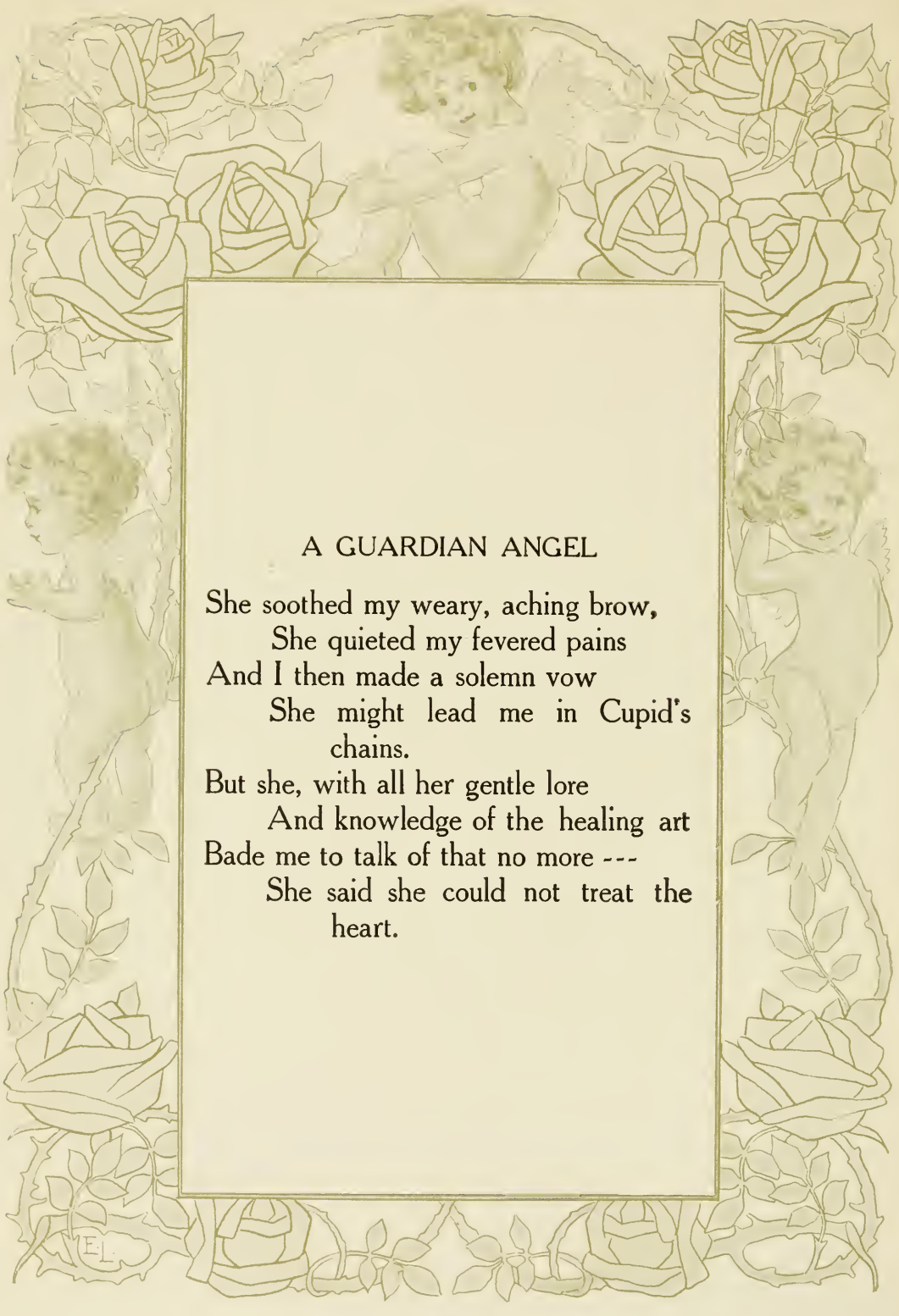


"O, PROMISE ME"

Out of the dreaming haze
Her face appears to me,
A maid of nights and days
She always seemed to be.
The dawn and twilight skies
Were ever pictured there ---
The dusk was in her eyes,
The dawn was in her hair.

EDNA LONGEST

THE TEAR

There was a tear upon her cheek---
Whether from pity or from grief
I had not then the mind to seek;
I only saw a pink rose leaf
Upon whose surface was a gleam
Reflecting all its fairy hue;
The little tear could only seem
A laughter-coaxing drop of dew.

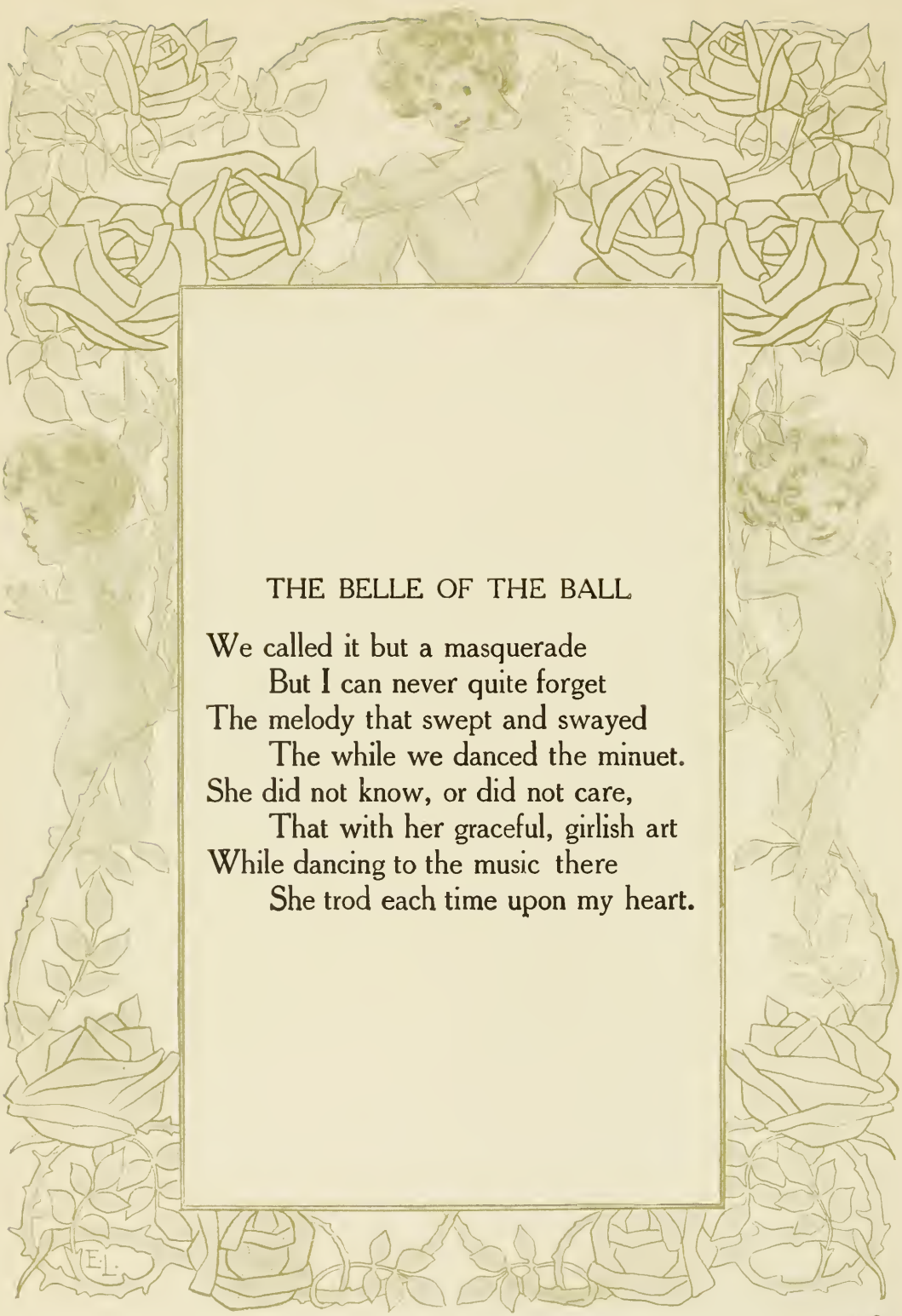


A GUARDIAN ANGEL

She soothed my weary, aching brow,
She quieted my fevered pains
And I then made a solemn vow
She might lead me in Cupid's chains.
But she, with all her gentle lore
And knowledge of the healing art
Bade me to talk of that no more ---
She said she could not treat the heart.

HER CHEEKS

In olden days the poets would
Write blithe ballade and sonnet
To Her Fair Cheek --- 'twas understood
They thus should write upon it.
But though I fain would write such rhyme
I fear I am too simple.
I know I could not find the time
To go beyond her dimple.



THE BELLE OF THE BALL

We called it but a masquerade
But I can never quite forget
The melody that swept and swayed
The while we danced the minuet.
She did not know, or did not care,
That with her graceful, girlish art
While dancing to the music there
She trod each time upon my heart.

TO THE REAL ONE

Here's to you, the fairest,
The sweetest and the rarest,
Of all the girls in all the world, to
you who are the best.
The truest and the nearest,
The lealest and the dearest---
The only one whose many charms
made me forget the rest.

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